Application No. 10/003,512
Filed: October 26, 2001
TC Art Unit: 2643
Confirmation No.: 7291

REMARKS

The present amendment and remarks are submitted in response to the Official Action dated August 26, 2004. All rejections and objections of the Examiner are respectfully traversed. Reconsideration of the application in view of the present amendment and remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-15 are pending in the application. Claim 1 is independent. Claims 1 and 2 have been amended. Claims 1, 2 and 7 have been amended.

Claim 1-7 stand rejected as anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,697,476 to O'Malley et al. ("O'Malley"). O'Malley describes an audio conferencing system that includes an audio conference mixer that receives digitized audio signals and sums a plurality of the digitized audio signals containing speech to provide a summed conference signal (O'Malley, Col. 1, ll. 41-46). The O'Malley reference describes the use of DTMF tones as follows:

> The centralized audio mixer also receives DTMF detect bits indicative of the digitized audio signals that include a DTMF tone. The DTMF detect bits may be provided by another of the DSPs that is programmed to detect DTMF tones. If the digitized audio signal is associated with a speaker, but the ditigtized audio signal includes a DTMF tone, the centralized conference mixer will not include the digitized audio signal in the summed conference signal while that DTMF detect bit signal is active. This ensures conference participants do not hear annoying DTMF tones in the conference audio. Then the DTMF tone is no longer present in the digitized

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audio signal, the centralized conference mixer may include the audio signal in the summed conference signal (O'Malley, Col. 2, ll. 20-33). Thus, a determination is made when a digitized audio signal that is associate with a speaker includes a DTMF tone. If the digitized audio signal includes a DTMF tone, a DTMF detect bit is set and the digitized audio signal is excluded for the mixer output. As described in O'Malley, "This ensures conference participants do not hear annoying DTMF tones in the conference audio." The Official Action makes reference to Figs. 6, 7a and 7b and refers generally to columns 5 and 6 of O'Malley as being relevant to the Applicant's claimed invention. It is believed that the portions that were intended to be referenced are Col. 6, l. 66 to Col. 8, l. 11 which describes the referenced Figures in O'Malley. The O'Malley patent pertains to a conference server but provides no disclosure or suggestion of any apparatus or method for testing a conference server.

Claim 1 is directed to a method for testing a conference server. More specifically, the method recited in claim 1 calls for generating a plurality of unique test tone signals, applying a different one of the unique test tone signals to each one of the plurality of conference server inputs,

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selectively combining at least some of the test tone signals within the conference server to generate a plurality of test output signals corresponding in number to said conference server inputs and coupling said test output signals to selected ones of said conference server outputs, analyzing said conference server outputs to identify which of said plurality of test tones are present within said conference server outputs, and providing an error indication in the event said test tone signals detected within each of said conference server outputs do not correspond to expected test tone signals.

O'Malley fails to disclose or suggest the claimed subject matter and provides no teaching pertaining to a method for testing a conference server. Moreover, if the teachings of O'Malley were adopted in Applicant's system, it would render Applicant's system for testing a conference server inoperative.

First it is noted that claim 1 calls for the application of a different test tone to each one of a plurality of conference server inputs. O'Malley provides no teaching with respect to the coupling of a different unique test tone to each of a plurality of conference server inputs.

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Claim 1 also calls for the selective combining of at least some of the test tone signals within the conference server. O'Malley provides no teaching to combine DTMF tones and in fact the system disclosed in O'Malley prevents DTMF tones from being combined by the centralized conference mixer. This would render O'Malley inoperative for the function intended by the Applicant. More specifically, the portion of O'Malley cited in the Official Action pertains to a filter that "ensures conference participants do not hear annoying DTMF tones in the conference audio". In O'Malley, when a DTMF tone is present in the audio input signal, a DTMF detect bit is set which is used by the centralized conference mixer to prevent the DTMF tone from being passed to the conference server output. As stated in O'Malley "If the digitized audio signal is associated with a speaker, but the digitized audio signal includes a DTMF tone, the centralized conference mixer will not include the digitized audio signal in the summed conference signal while that DTMF detect bit signal is active." Thus, while the presently claimed method generates test tones which are mixed to produce output signals, O'Malley teaches to prevent DTMF tones from reaching

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the output channels. In this respect, the teaching of O'Malley is opposite to the claimed invention.

Claim 1 further calls for analyzing the conference server outputs to identify which of said plurality of test tone signals are present within the conference server outputs. O'Malley provides no disclosure of suggestion of the desirability of testing the outputs of a conference server for test tone content. In contrast with the claimed invention that permits the unique test tones to be combined in the conference server and the outputs to be tested for the presence of the test tones, O'Malley filters out DTMF tones to prevent such tones from being passed through to the conference server outputs. Consequently, in O'Malley, no DTMF tones are available at the conference server outputs to permit an analysis to determine whether such tones are present.

Finally, claim 1 calls for the provision of an error indication in the event that the test tone signals within each of the conference server outputs do not correspond with expected test tone signals. Since O'Malley is not performing any analysis of conference server outputs to determine whether test tones are present, O'Malley does not describe a

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method for testing a conference server. Thus, O'Malley's system is not capable of providing the claimed error indication and O'Malley provides no disclosure of suggestion of the desirability of providing such an error indication.

In view of the foregoing, the Applicant respectfully sugmits that claim 1 is patentable over O'Malley.

Claims 2-15 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and are believed allowable at least for the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1.

Neither Dighe nor Julstrom add materially with respect to the subject matter recited in present claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all present claims are allowable over the art of record and the allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

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The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned attorney to discuss any matter that would expedite allowance of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

ANDY SPITZER, ET AL.

By: _____
Victor B. Lebovici
Registration No. 30,864
Attorney for Applicants

WEINGARTEN, SCHURGIN,
GAGNEBIN & LEBOVICI LLP
Ten Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109
Telephone: (617) 542-2290
Telecopier: (617) 451-0313

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